



SARANAC LAKE

VILLAGE ADVISORY BOARDS 2020 REPORT



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**COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT FUND
PROJECT COMMITTEE 15**

VILLAGE OF SARANAC LAKE

— INC. 1892 —

ARTS AND CULTURE ADVISORY BOARD

ACAB Members

Kathy Ford, Chair
Shaun Kittle, Vice Chair
Jess Collier
Emilie Allen
Sadie Posdich
Kirk Sullivan
Nathalie Thill
Dylan Van Cott
Elaine Taylor
Melinda Little, Ex-Officio

The Advisory Board shall have the power and be required to:

- A. Act in an advisory capacity in matters pertaining to the arts and culture.
- B. Advocate for the implementation of the Arts and Culture Master Plan by addressing its five goals:
 1. *Arts and Cultural Community Engagement*
 2. *Master Plan Funding Acquisition*
 3. *Targeted Arts Marketing Campaign*
 4. *Organizational and Artist Support*
 5. *Arts and Culturally Driven Economic Development*
- C. Act as a liaison between the arts and cultural community and the Board of Trustees. Or Supplement village staff as a liaison with arts and culture-related organizations
- D. Promote public and private cooperation in support of the arts and culture.

ARTS AND CULTURE ADVISORY BOARD

The purpose of the Advisory Board is to make recommendations to the Saranac Lake Village Board of Trustees regarding policies and actions that facilitate implementation of the Village of Saranac Lake Arts and Culture Master Plan. The Advisory Board will undertake actions that support the following vision statement:

"The historic Village of Saranac Lake supports thriving arts, cultural, and community institutions, in an all-inclusive environment that fosters the creative economy, community pride, downtown revitalization, and a myriad of diverse year-round offerings within outstanding natural surroundings."



Introduction

The Arts and Culture Advisory Board (ACAB) met for the first time in June 2019. Their efforts have focused on implementing several strategies listed in the Arts & Culture Master Plan and the results so far are impressive. ACAB projects have focused on two areas from the Master Plan.

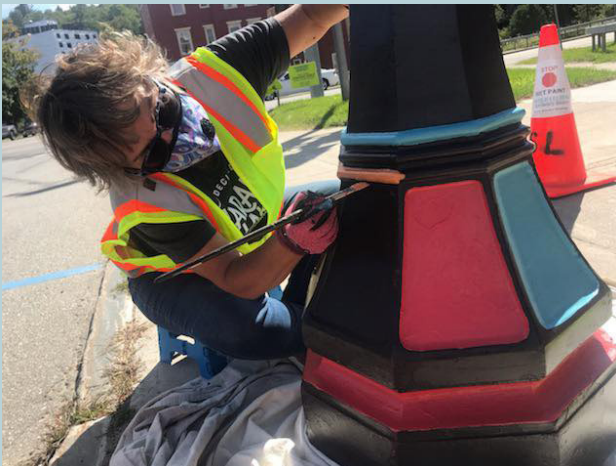
1. Visually brand the Village as an arts and culture destination through public art

These projects are part of a bigger ACAB effort to visually brand Saranac Lake as an arts and culture destination, starting with small art installations on public amenities around town.

2. Targeted arts marketing campaign

Focus Area 1

Visually brand the Village as an arts and culture destination through public art



Streetlight Painting

Seven downtown lamp posts have received a fresh makeover by adding a splash of the Saranac Lake mosaic brand to the base.

- Approx 60 volunteer hour went into the planning, cleaning, and painting of the 7 streetlights

Raining Poetry

This public art installation on downtown sidewalks consists of five excerpts from poems by local and regional poets. The paint used for the project is invisible unless it's wet, so the poems will only appear when it's raining.

- Project was done in partnership with the Adirondack Center for Writing. Nathalie Thill is a member of ACAB and Director of the Adirondack Center for Writing. She curated a list of poems, held a public vote to select the finalists, and then her family contributed 28 hours of volunteer time to paint the poems on the sidewalks.
- Due to the pandemic, ACAB could not host a reveal party as planned, so ACAB member Kirk Sullivan produced a video that was shared on social media. This was a \$5,000 in-kind donation by Bing Bang Boom.





Arts Streetlight Banners

ACAB members created a new set of banners for the downtown streetlights. The concept for the project was a collaboration between ACAB members Kathy Ford and Shaun Kittle. Local artist Anna Kittle drew the illustrations, Ford designed the banners, and Shaun Kittle wrote the words.

- The three professional volunteers donated over 90 hours of their time to create the concept, design and illustrate the banners.



Projection Art

At the entrance to the alleyway between Downhill Grill and Bing Bang Boom's office on Main Street, ACAB board member and filmmaker Kirk Sullivan created a new projection art installation, which he said brings a bit of big city flair to our downtown. Sullivan's production company Bing Bang Boom, Inc. produced the projection art with support from ROOST.

- ACAB members dedicated approximately 60 volunteer hours towards the planning, purchasing, installation, and design of this project.



Blackfly Sculpture

A member of ACAB facilitated the commissioning of a blackfly sculpture by a local property owner. The blackfly will be featured on a downtown building.

Focus Area 2

Targeted arts marketing campaign

Unified social media branding

ACAB members have established a hashtag to be utilized by all Saranac Lake arts entities: #decidedlyarts

- Over 80 social media posts using #decidedlyarts since it was launched in September 2020



Interesting adaptations to COVID

Arts and culture businesses and organizations are vital to downtown revitalization and maintaining the vibrancy of our downtown. Unfortunately, many of these businesses have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic due to limitations on large gatherings. However, some of these businesses have found creative ways to adapt to the current situation, which demonstrates the advantages of having decidedly different ways of thinking.

Waterhole

Kiki Sarko and Eric Munley started a Community Supported Music program. They sold shares to supporters in exchange for tickets to future concerts, drink chips, merch like coozies and T-shirts and, most importantly, keeping our local music venue's doors open for now. The Waterhole is a member of the National Independent Venue Association, a group that's lobbying with Congress to try to get federal aid passed to keep small music venues open. Go to saveourstages.com to find out how you can help.

Pendragon

The crew at Pendragon Theatre has managed to stay busy by streaming a plethora of play readings, workshops and germ-free theatre productions. Their summer camp program for kids, which usually results in a full-length production on the Pendragon stage, looked a little different, with local students working individually to develop audition packages. Pendragon even held a virtual summer gala, complete with a streaming show to warm up attendees.

BluSeed

BluSeed shifted their spring and summer break classes to a virtual format, putting together packages of materials for families to pick up then instructing kids via online video tutorials. Their Off The Wall holiday sale, featuring pieces of art for less than \$100, includes open gallery hours with limited capacity and masks. BluSeed added an online sales option for this event for people who prefer not to visit the gallery.

Adirondack Center for Writing (ACW)

ACW shifted several of its programs to an online format, including the popular Howl Story Slam and their annual PoemVillage poetry celebration. The organization's creative writing program for the men's federal prison in Ray Brook moved to mail correspondence. Because of so many people experiencing economic hardship due to the pandemic, ACW shifted both their online writing classes and their bookmobile to a pay-what-you-can model, making reading and writing accessible to more community members. They also started regular online gatherings of book lovers called book hangouts to connect people, and they worked with local authors, teachers and staff to provide writing prompts to the local writing community to keep creative juices flowing.

CURRENT PRIORITIES

- Public Art
- Mural on wall next to Ward Plumadore Park
- Customize public amenities
- Explore creation of a public art fund
- Promote use of #decidedlyarts
- Creatively repurpose empty storefronts with pop-up galleries or education



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DOWNTOWN ADVISORY BOARD

DAB Members

Tim Fortune, Chair
Adam Harris, Vice Chair
Diane Litynski
Kelly Brunette
Laura Cunningham
Brandon DeVito
CJ Hagmann
Jerry Michael
Kathy Steinbrueck
Melinda Little, Ex-Officio

The Advisory Board shall have the power and be required to:

1. Act in advisory capacity in matters pertaining to issues, policies, actions that affect Downtown Saranac Lake.
2. Assist in the planning and implementation of downtown events, promotions, beautification, fundraising, infrastructure improvements, and stimulate public interest therein; and seek cooperation of public and private entities.
3. Act as a liaison between Downtown stakeholders and the Board of Trustees.
4. Advocate for the implementation of adopted plans and policies related to Downtown Saranac Lake.

DOWNTOWN ADVISORY BOARD

The purpose of the Advisory Board is to make recommendations to the Saranac Lake Village Board of Trustees regarding policies and undertake actions that support the following mission statement:

“Improve economic vitality by enhancing the experience, image and lifestyle of Downtown Saranac Lake.”

Message from the Chair

Downtown Saranac Lake is poised and ready to enter into a new and exciting phase prompted by the implementation of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative grant of 10 million dollars. These very challenging times of the Covid pandemic affect every aspect of our lives, so it is inspiring to see the Village Advisory Boards moving forward and collaborating on new projects which will benefit residents and visitors alike. The Downtown Advisory Board has been working diligently on its mission to improve the lifestyle, image, and economy of the downtown area.

LIFESTYLE

It’s been said that downtowns are the living rooms of our community. Places where we conduct business meetings, socialize and attend events. By promoting and encouraging people to attend these activities at local restaurants, drinking establishments as well as usage of Berkeley Green and Riverside Park we are enhancing the quality of experiences for all ages and income levels.

IMAGE

First impressions are important. With the branding process complete we feel the end result has captured the essence of our “Decidedly Different” community. It will help drive originality of what we see in our parks, pedestrian walkways, landscaping and building improvements.

ECONOMY

Any improvement to our downtown area directly or indirectly improves our economy. We must be diligent and do everything possible to keep existing businesses and encourage new entrepreneurs. The planned DRI improvements will dramatically enhance all aspects of experiences in the arts, culture and economy of Downtown Saranac Lake.

Tim Fortune
Chair of the Downtown Advisory Board



Recent Accomplishments

Plans, Policies & Programs

Downtown Banner Program (2019)

Downtown Strategic Investment Plan (2019)

Actions

- Traffic Calming project at Berkley Green intersection (6er logo)
- Increase number of flower planters on downtown streets
- Establish winter evergreen tree planters in downtown parks
- Create image campaigns for downtown: Picnic SL
- Maintain downtown stakeholder database, business inventory, and an available property inventory
- Furniture for Berkeley Green & Riverside Park
- Community Enhancement Fund committee project: Saranac Lake Bug Crawl
- Business recruitment to fill vacant storefronts
- Support and endorse infrastructure improvements downtown





DAB Events

Music on the Green

- Downtown Spring Clean Up Day (May)
- Music on the Green (Wednesdays July & August)
- Downtown Trick or Treating (October 31)
- Light Up Downtown Saranac Lake (First Friday in December)
- Annual Mixer (December)



Light up Downtown Saranac Lake



Downtown Trick or Treating

CURRENT PRIORITIES

- DRI Project Implementation
- Update village parking maps for website/ distribute to businesses
- Rail Trail connections to downtown and use of depot buildings on Depot St.
- Remove unnecessary DOT signage throughout downtown.
- Support "Support Local SL" campaign in partnership with Chamber
- Creatively repurpose empty storefronts with pop-up galleries or education

Downtown Business Snapshot

*Some businesses have closed due to COVID-19, but hope to reopen.



SERVICES

79



RETAIL SHOPS

33



RESTAURANTS/

19



ORGANIZATIONS

12



ART GALLERIES

6



CHURCHES

7



ATTRACTIONS

5



BANKS

4



HOTEL

1

New Downtown Businesses

- **ADK ArtRise:** a creative outlet for people of all ages and abilities to find joy in the act of making.
- **Barley Sandwich:** modern, artistic vibe, and quality ingredients.
- **Tell Media:** consulting for marketing, PR, media relations, and more.
- **Hex & Hop Farm Co-op:** staples from your favorite local producers.
- **Bing Bang Boom Productions:** specializes in integrated music and sound design for film, television, advertising, and video games.



PARKS AND TRAILS ADVISORY BOARD

PTAB Members

- Tyler Merriam, Chair
- Ashley Milne, Vice Chair
- Ezra Schwartzberg
- Sara Roth
- Jimmy Cunningham, Secretary
- Colleen O’Neill
- Dwight Stevenson
- Lindy Ellis
- Steve Langdon
- Rich Shapiro, Ex-Officio

The Advisory Board shall have the power and be required to:

1. Act in advisory capacity in matters pertaining to recreation and transportation so as to promote and support healthy lifestyles.
2. Consider the Village budget for parks, recreation, leisure and transportation, making recommendations with respect thereto to the Village Manager.
3. Assist in the planning of recreation and transportation initiatives; promote and stimulate public interest therein; and seek cooperation of public and private entities.
4. Develop recommendations that integrate pedestrian and bicycle travel into a Complete Streets plan to enable safe access for all users.
5. Make recommendations regarding healthy infrastructure improvements needed in the Village.
6. Advocate for the implementation of adopted plans and policies related to healthy infrastructure.

PARKS AND TRAILS ADVISORY BOARD

The purpose of the Advisory Board is to make recommendations to the Saranac Lake Village Board on policy and implementation that support and promote healthy lifestyles through healthy infrastructure.

Completed Projects/Actions

PTAB works on implementing two adopted plans: Park Vision Plan and the Bicycle & Pedestrian Trails Master Plan.

PTAB members played a key role in developing the Park Vision Plan which was adopted by the Village Board in 2018. Since then, PTAB has focused on implementing various elements of the plan. Perhaps most importantly, PTAB members participated in the drafting of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative which provides grant funding for the redesign of three downtown parks as conceptualized in the Park Vision Plan: Ward Plumadore, William Morris and Berkeley Green.

PTAB members have worked on implementation of the Bike & Pedestrian Trails Master Plan by completing the following projects:

- Facilitated installation of Wayfinding Signage at Baker Mt, Lake Flower Boat Launch, & directional signs throughout the village
- Drafted Complete Streets Recommendations which were implemented on Olive St, Brandy Brook Ave, Canaras Ave
- Prepared a Complete Streets Policy Review & Report
- Advocated for traffic calming on Park Ave. which led to installation of a stop sign
- Painted the 6er logo at the intersection of Main & Broadway, in partnership with DAB & ACAB, as a traffic calming measure



Other recent park projects include:

- Branded bike racks in parks
- More seating in downtown parks
- Trees planted in waterfront parks

In addition, PTAB also:

- Provided input for the Riverwalk Alternatives Analysis & Dorsey St. Parking Lot Redesign
- Developed content for the Recreation pages on the Village website
- Prepares a Park Maintenance Checklist for DPW each spring

Programs

- Smitty Days - Baker Mt trail work, SkatePark erosion control, tree work on Riverwalk, fence layout for William Morris Park, Common Ground Garden fence (2018, 2019)
- Community Bike Ride (2019)
- Safe Routes to School Encouragement Campaign (2018, 2019)
- Walk Friendly Community Recognition (2018)



Partnerships

- Fireworks Clean Up - Winter Carnival & Saranac Waterfront Lodge

Bike & Pedestrian Infrastructure Update

- Trails - 3.55 miles new trails constructed 2018-2020 by BETA
 - 0.3 miles at Pisgah (I.P.W)
 - 2 miles at Dewey (Monopoly, Boulder Dash, Donkey Kong)
 - 1.25 miles at Fowler's Crossing
- Sidewalks - 3102 linear feet (about ½ mile) of sidewalk was reconstructed/constructed in 2018-2020 (921 ft new on Canaras, Lake Flower Ave & Petrova - school drop off plaza)
- Bikeways - 2.9 total miles of bikeways (no change since 2017)

Exciting Community Projects

- SkatePark Lights installed with funds raised by SkatePark Committee
- Whitewater Park on Saranac River is coordinated by ADK Action
- BETA constructed new trails at Pisgah & Fowler's Crossing

Recent Grant Awards for Park Improvements

- DRI \$4.1m for Parks, Streetscapes, and Connectivity Improvements
- Adirondack Smart Growth Grant for Southern Gateway Connector to Rail
- LWRP Implementation Grant for River Street Streetscape Enhancements (\$24,000)
- LWRP Planning Grant for updating the VSL Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (\$100,000)



CURRENT PRIORITIES

- DRI project Implementation
- River St. Streetscape Enhancements
- Update Local Waterfront Revitalization Program - update list of recommended projects
- Arbor Day Event Planning

- Leave No Trace Education for 6ers
- Trail Maintenance Stewardship Agreement for Baker Mt (Saranac Lake Trail Stewards)
- Update Wayfinding Maps
- Explore feasibility of a Pump Track in Saranac Lake

2021 BUG CRAWL

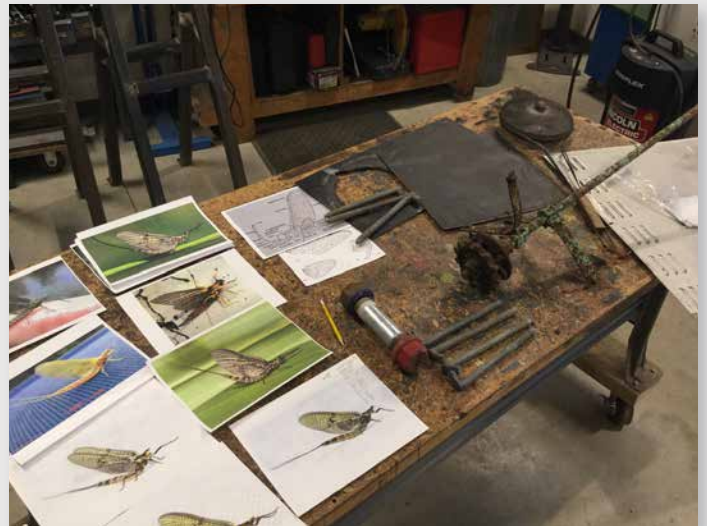
In June, the Saranac Lake village board of trustees unanimously voted to create a \$12,500 Community Enhancement Fund to support the efforts of the three village advisory boards. A committee of three members from each board was formed to develop a project, and the Saranac Lake Bug Crawl was born.

Slated for a spring launch, the Bug Crawl will be a collection of metal insect sculptures installed in six village locations—Riverside Park, Berkeley Green, the Skatepark, Carousel Park, and two locations along the River Walk.

A brochure, written and designed by local talent, will identify the general location of each insect, but it will be up to Bug Crawlers to find each one. Similar to other challenges in the region, a fun award will be available after every bug is found.

The completed sculptures will be biologically accurate and designed to scale by artist and North Country School teacher Larry Robjent, who in 2018 constructed Woodruff Street's enormous Tessie the lawn serpent sculpture with 16 seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-grade students.

The public will have a chance to vote on which insects Robjent sculpts, and a scrap metal donation day is also in the works for those who want to turn their junk into an entomological work of art.





LAYOUT AND DESIGN BY ADIRONDACK RESEARCH